

Remarks

The Examiner has objected to claims 5-8 and 10-12 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended claims 5-8 and 10-12 to be in independent form, including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant respectfully suggests that claims 5-8 and 10-12 are now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4, 9 and 13 as being rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by European Patent 587131 to Vogelsang. In response, Applicant has amended claim 1 to change the terms “wedge housing positioning” to “positioning member separating” in the final element of the claim. Vogelsang does not disclose or suggest a positioning member separating a spigot wedge ring relative to a socket wedge ring. As amended, it is respectfully suggested that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

The basis for the amendment in claim 1 is found at Figure 6 and in the specification with reference to Figure 6, page 12, lines 7-13.

With respect to claim 2, Applicant has amended the second element to change the contact point of the opposed frusto-conical surface to the positioning member. Vogelsang does not disclose a socket wedge ring comprising a opposed frusto-conical surface in effective contact with the positioning member. Therefore, Applicant respectfully suggests that claim 2 is now in condition for allowance.

The basis for the amendment in claim 2 is found at Figure 6 and in the specification with reference to Figure 6, page 12, lines 7-13.

With respect to claims 3 and 4, both claims depend from amended claims which are believed to be allowable and, therefore, are also allowable over the Vogelsang reference.

Applicant has amended claim 9 to depend from claim 6 which, in turn, depends from claim 2. Applicant suggests that claim 9, as amended, depends from an allowable claim and is, therefore, allowable.

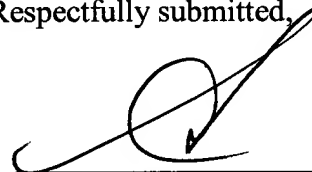
The basis for the amendment in claim 9 is found at Figures 7, 8 and 9.

Claim 13 depends from claim 2 which, as amended, is now allowable and is, therefore, allowable.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-13 are now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests such action.

A check for the additional independent claims is enclosed herewith. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment of fees due with this amendment, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-2225.

Respectfully submitted,



George R. Schultz, Reg. No. 35,674

Date: JUNE 10 2003

SCHULTZ & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
One Lincoln Centre
5400 LBJ Freeway, Suite 525
Dallas, Texas 75240
(214) 210-5940 telephone
(214) 210-5941 facsimile

The PTO did not receive the following
listed item(s) check for additional
independent claims